

Newborough Parish Council

*Winner - East Staffordshire Best Kept Small Village 2005 & 2006
Winner - Best Kept Small Village and Overall Best Kept Village in East Staffordshire - 2002 & 2003
Winner - Best Kept Small Village in East Staffordshire - 1995 - 2000
Joint Winner - Best Kept Small Village in Staffordshire - 1997*

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER **April 2008 to March 2009**

Mr. Jim Barks: I would like to start my annual report by saying a huge 'thank you' to Jim. Jim has worked in the village maintaining the grassed areas for more years than I can recall. He has now decided to retire and hang up his shears. On behalf of all the parishioners – "thank you Jim".

Parish Councillors: I am pleased to say that Mr Phil Spencer expressed an interest in the vacancy on the Parish Council and was duly co-opted in May last year. Phil has lived in the parish for 13 years and is involved in the establishment of the proposed new village hall and does in fact sit as Chairman on the Village Hall Committee.

Parish Clerk: The Parish Council now has a new clerk. Ian Colclough has been in post since April last year, taking over from Chris Roach. Ian tells me that the position is extremely interesting and that he is still very much 'learning the ropes' and wanted to thank Chris for the help and support she has afforded him so far. Ian can be contacted on 01543 689117.

Best Kept Village: Judging took place in May, June and July for Best Kept Village 2008. Sadly last year, Newborough was unsuccessful. The overall comments made by the Judges stated that there were one or two minor problems that require attention before this year. Mention was made of the lack of signage for the recycling facility, patchy maintenance in the churchyard and various minor issues concerning the play area. As a village, we can be proud of our success in this competition in the past and I am sure everyone will make an extra special effort during the judging period this year. Judges will visit the village three times, first in May, then in June with judging of the finals taking place in July.

Funding/Improvements: A big thank you to the many initiatives and organisations that help financially support some of our improvements, £19,000 of which was spent on the All Saints Church Wall.

- Lottery Fund - £10,000
- WASP Grant (Cllr. Tim Corbett) - £2000
- Members Initiative Scheme - £2000
- ESBC - £5000
- SCC - £900
- CASES - £100

Highways: We are in constant touch with Staffordshire Highways who are very helpful, given their aim to respond to every parishes needs. For the first time last year they introduced a 'lengthsmans agreement'. This is in effect a return to years gone by when every parish had staff working on the highway and attending to minor defects.

This new agreement means that we can again attend to these defects and claim monies back from SCC Highways. As you are aware Janet Barks undertakes much of this work on our behalf and for this we thank her.

Another development is the use of 'community gangs'. In effect this means that SCC Highways make a gang of workmen available in the parish every once in a while to attend to work that is outside the remit of the lengthsmans agreement. They will attend to more serious defects such as potholes, minor footway repairs, overgrown hedging and damaged signs. A list of defects is compiled by Cllr. Nelson and sent via Lichfield depot to the gang. If you have issues that you feel the gang could address please let a Parish Councillor or the Clerk know.

Finally, I should like to thank Cllr. Nelson for his regular communication with Staffordshire Highways regarding village needs and concerns.

Street Lighting: You will be aware that we have now completed the first phase of the lighting improvements around the village centre. This is a rolling project and as and when monies become

available we shall endeavour to undertake additional improvements. The new lights certainly add additional character to the village centre as well as giving a better light at less environmental cost.

Footpaths: The footpaths around the parish continue to cause some concern to us. We are aware of a number of issues with obstructions and damaged or worn out stiles and gates. Parishioner Mike Sutherland walks these paths for us on a regular basis and reports problems that are passed through to the rights of way department at Stafford. We understand that there is a shortage of funds to attend to all our requests but we shall keep the pressure on until improvements are made. We are currently in the process of applying for grants to help us in the production of some local walks leaflets. In the meantime, if you come across any issues with paths in the parish, please either contact Mike, the parish Clerk or any councillor.

All Saints Church Wall: This project, which was in the planning for several years, has now finally come to fruition. We are sure you will agree that this has made safety at the junction of Yoxall Road with the B5234 much better, with visibility greatly improved. Our thanks go to the contractor for the speedy way in which they completed the works despite one of the coldest winters for some time. The next step will be to consult with Staffordshire Highways with a view to providing some form of traffic calming, perhaps in the form of a humped crossing. We shall be required to make a financial contribution towards this and we shall be seeking grant aid to offset the cost.

Playground: We realise that some of the equipment on the playground is now somewhat old and in need of refurbishment or replacement. It is our intention to seek grant aid to help us achieve this. We have been actively seeking advice from various sources as to the best way to secure suitable funding. To this end we have set up a small working group that, we are advised, has a better chance of securing grant aid than the parish council.

We are hopeful that we shall be able to install a small bridge across the Swarbourn to allow children to use play equipment on the other side of the river. (Phase 1) Replacement play equipment including a zip wire is proposed (phase 2) along with a football pitch (phase 3). Estimates indicate an expected expenditure for these improvements of around £50,000. Needless to say we shall only achieve this over several years. I should also like to say a big thank you to those parishioners that turned out on Sunday 15th March to help clear debris and shrubs from the playground area and river.

Parish Plan: We have made the decision to go ahead with creating a 'Parish Plan' that will take 12 to 18 months to put together. As well as setting the vision for the next 10 years it will also help us to get grants for future projects. We have been able to get a £900.00 grant from the Countryside Agency to help us to produce the plan. The Parish Council will be contributing £180.00 to this fund.

We invited you all to a meeting towards the end of last year, where Annie Briggs gave a presentation explaining what the Parish Plan would contain and the help we needed from the community. Thank you to everyone for the positive feedback and to all of you who have volunteered to help. We will consult with everyone in the community in the production of this plan and ask you all to participate.

Speed Watch: We now have shared access to a speed gun and several volunteers have been trained in its use. Due to the nature of the road layout through the village there are limited places where the equipment can be deployed. Despite this Mr Peck will out and about with his team of helpers encouraging motorists to slow down as they pass through our community. May we thank Mr Peck for his endeavours in this direction.

Village web site: Many of you will have visited the village web site. It includes useful information on local businesses, clubs, events and news. This should be your first port of call for Parish Council notices too with minutes of meetings, contact names and much more. The Webmaster is Nigel Albiston and the council would like to thank him for keeping the site up to date and well maintained. The web address is www.newboroughvillage.co.uk

Freedom of Information Act: From 1st January it is the responsibility of all public bodies to list and make available to the public as much information as possible. To this end the Parish Council has endeavoured to put as much general information as possible in the public domain. The notice board now carries some of this, as too does the village web site. (Web address as above)

Newborough Well Dressing: Report by Rachel Oakley: May Day is nearly upon us and Newborough will once again be Well Dressing. The theme for this year's boards will be based on a Victorian theme.

May Day - May 4th this year - will start at 10.30am with a family service in the church, during which, we will crown the May Queen. At 11.15 the procession will commence and this will be followed by the usual live entertainments and family fun day on the school field. This year will also mark the 100th anniversary of our village school and 30 years of well dressing.

Again, we will be inviting children - of all ages - to make and decorate their own "mini maypole". This is an old tradition, sometimes known as "garlanding", and was a central feature of May Day celebrations in central and southern England until the mid-19th century. There will be grand judging at about 12 noon in the Square with prizes for the most attractive. Please support our attempt to re-introduce this old tradition and make May Day even more colourful.

There are plans to extend the number of sideshow attractions and we will be spreading further out of the village centre. We are pleased that the Italian marketers have agreed to join us again and we will have music supplied by both The Vintage Jazz Roadshow and Uttoxeter Town Brass Band. Take your stresses out and have a go at our 'Smash the Crockery', browse the craft stalls and chance your luck with our raffle prizes! We are also running two competitions for the children; 'bake a cake' and a 'Victoria themed picture' using recycled items.

The park and ride facility will be in place at Eland Lodge, courtesy of John and Veronica Coupland, which we would urge visitors to use to ease the congestion in and around the village.

We would greatly appreciate offers of help, particularly on the day itself, so if you could spare an hour or two, please get in touch. Or why not help decorate the well boards (Contact: Gill Spencer 575303) All monies raised are donated to charities, this year it will be split between Scropton Riding Centre for the Disabled and The Cerebral Palsy Association. I can be contacted on (01283) 575988.

"Come on – have some fun!"

All Saints Church, Newborough: Report by Brian Beck and Rod Stace, Church Wardens:

Review of the Year for 2008: Regular weekly worship has taken place throughout the year, with services of Holy Communion, Holy Communion by extension and Family worship. Once again we offer a special 'thank you' to all who prepare our church for worship and who provide support by their presence and financial contributions to the upkeep of the church.

Highlights of the year included the May Day celebration, the Flower Festival, and the Christmas Eve Crib service. We also said goodbye to Revd Timothy Fox who retired from his position as House for Duty Minister in the Tutbury Benefice during the year. Timothy and Edith carry the best wishes of all at Newborough Church for the future.

The May Day celebrations commenced with a service in the church, during which the Revd. Alex Mann crowned the May Queen. This was followed by the traditional procession around the village to bless the three wells. The church looked especially beautiful as it was decorated by the many imaginative contributions to the Flower Festival, the theme this year being "Shakespeare's Plays".

The Christmas Eve crib service saw the church full to overflowing again. Children from the village placed figures representing the Nativity into the crib and a number of villagers led prayers and gave musical contributions.

In September, we were pleased to host the Tutbury Deanery Synod meeting. This was the first occasion for many years that this quarterly event had come to Newborough. The Bishop of Stafford led a Holy Communion service in the church before Synod members held their meeting in the Youth and Adult Centre.

Last year we recorded that the very generous legacy from the estate of the son of the late Revd Cyril Francis Taylor, who had been vicar of Newborough at the end of the 1930's, had stabilised the financial situation at All Saint's and had allowed the PCC to authorise a number of projects to improve the fabric of our church. This work continued in 2008 with the replacement of the churchyard wall (work conducted in conjunction with the Parish Council) and the refurbishment of the Yoxall Road gate. We were also able to install a public address system with hearing loop into the church.

Plans for further expenditure include a longer term aspiration of providing mains water and drainage services to the church to enable toilets to be built, with the eventual provision of a meeting room and refreshment facility at the church.

Due to the improved financial situation, the PCC is pleased to report that, presently, the Parish share has been paid in full, but members continue to be concerned at the prospect of still larger increases in the future and continue to seek ways of matching expenditure with income.

Statistics for 2008: Average weekly attendance 12, Baptisms 1, Weddings 1, Funerals 3.

Needwood CE (VA) Primary School: Report by Michelle O'Dell, Head Teacher

The links between school and our local churches continue to grow stronger and stronger. The children are feeling especially honoured to be invited to participate at The Licensing Service of The Reverend

Leslie Rees. We are all very excited to welcome him into our school and community family and wish him very well as he embarks on his new adventure!

Class 2 recently, enjoyed a visit to All Saints as a part of their RE lesson looking at the various signs and symbols found inside the church. It is wonderful to be able to use our church as 'resource' not only to help our children learn but to develop spiritually. Class 3 will also be visiting the church as they take part in 'Stations of the Cross'.

We are also planning two more services at All Saints' over the coming weeks. This year we are going to hold our annual Mothers' Day Service in the church, which Reverend Mann has kindly agreed to lead. The children are going to thinking about how special mothers are, performing their own songs, poems and so on, to celebrate and thank their own mums. A school Easter Service will be held on Friday 3rd March 2009 2pm – 3pm, again at All Saints', to which we would like members of the congregation and local community to join us. We all thoroughly enjoyed coming together as a family for the Christingle service in December and hope that we can do the same again at this special time of year.

For details about the school, including a broader insight into their activities please log onto the school website: www.needwood.staffs.sch.uk.

Youth and Adult Centre: Report by Phil Spencer: As we are all aware the building will close this coming summer. Suitable arrangements are being discussed with the school project team and this will be communicated to the user groups shortly. Can we take this opportunity to thank Evelyn for the work she and her team have done in the last few years. The new accommodation for all user groups will be discussed at an open meeting once planning has finally been confirmed this month.

Volunteers are always welcome and anyone interested in assisting should contact Gill or Phil Spencer on (01283) 575303.

Youth Club: The club continues to grow and its committee are looking for new members to join the existing committee members in order to take the club forward. The future of the youth club is very dependent on the Village Hall being built as fairly soon we will be without a venue. Anyone wishing to contact the Youth Club can ring Gill or Phil on (01283) 575303.

Recycle Bins: Despite home recycling collections, recycling bins are still located in the Red Lion car park. These provide a financial benefit to Newborough Youth Club and we urge those residents who are not yet part of the recycling scheme to continue to use them and for other residents to use them as an 'overflow' facility, between normal collections.

Staffordshire Police: P.C. 3574 Guy Jones can be contacted on 08453 303132 and he is based at Uttoxeter Police Station.

Notes of Appreciation:

- Thank you all for your continued support in the village entry for Best Kept Village
- Thanks to Jim and Janet Barks for all their work throughout the year helping to keep the village tidy
- Thanks to Jim Barks for mowing the Churchyard and keeping it so presentable.
- To the children of Needwood CE(A) Primary School for the wonderful Best Kept Village Posters
- Thanks to all the village organisations who keep our village life so entertaining
- Maurice Beeston for donating the colourful hanging baskets to the village
- Gerry Peck for his help in instigating the speedwatch programme.
- Bob Rushton for his help to the Parish Council
- Mike Sutherland for footpath inspections and reports
- Nigel Albiston for maintaining the village web site.
- Parish Councillors for their continued support
- The Parish Clerk, Ian Colclough for his work and support

Councillors:	Brenda Skipper (Chairman)	575600
	Paul Macpherson (Vice Chairperson)	575383
	Annie Briggs	575565
	William Prince	575220
	Andrew Nelson	575477
	Richard Oakley	575988
	Phil Spencer	575303
Parish Clerk:	Ian Colclough	01543 689117

Councillor Brenda Skipper-Chairman